AMHERST-PELHAM REGIONAL SCHOOLS
Fiscal Year 2007

Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee

Elaine Brighty, Chairperson (Amherst)	Marianne Jorgensen (Shutesbury)
Kathleen Anderson (Amherst)	Chrystel Romero (Amherst)
Maureen Ecclestone (Pelham)	Michael Katz (Leverett)
Michael Hussin, Vice-Chairperson (Pelham)	Andy Churchill (Amherst)
Sonia Correa Pope, Secretary (Amherst)	

The Regional School Committee represents the four communities that comprise the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District: Amherst, Pelham, Leverett, and Shutesbury. It is responsible for the direction and support of the educational programs for students in Grades 7 through 12 from each of these towns. Committee meetings are open to the public, except for executive sessions as prescribed by law, and are held regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday evenings of each month. Opportunity is available at every meeting for public participation.

STUDENTS
Enrollment in the Regional Middle and Senior High Schools as of October 1, 2006 decreased by 47 students. Enrollments on October 1 over the last ten years were as follows:

1996-1997	1,907	2001-2002	2,068
1997-1998	1,937	2002-2003	2,032
1998-1999	2,007	2003-2004	2,043
1999-2000	2,017	2004-2005	1,921
2000-2001	2,044	2005-2006	1,924

In addition, 41 Regional students were enrolled in vocational schools as of October 1, 2006. Seven students attended other school districts under the State's School Choice Program, and 56 students were enrolled at charter schools. Tuition for district students to attend these schools is paid by the Regional School District.

As of February 1, 2007, when this report was prepared, enrollment in the Regional Middle and Senior High Schools was as follows:

2006-2007

Grade	Amherst	Pelham	Leverett	Shutesbury	Wards	Tuition	Total
7	208	16	13	23	-	12	272
8	220	18	19	13	-	13	283
9	241	14	12	23	-	20	310
10	226	20	18	27	-	22	313
11	227	22	21	30	-	26	326
12	250	22	19	31	-	27	349
Totals	**1,372**	**112**	**102**	**147**	**-**	**120**	**1,853**

There were 229 students from Amherst who graduated with the class of 2006.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The instructional program, developed by teachers in all areas of the curriculum, reflects the overall philosophy and goals of education established by the School Committee. An appropriate range of support services remains in place to help students achieve their highest possible potential. Included among these programs are Guidance, Health Services, Special Education, and English Language Learners Program.

Amherst–Pelham Regional High School is a four-year comprehensive school and is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The student body of the High School and Middle School is culturally diverse, with a population that comprises 70% Caucasian, 10% African-American, 10% Asian, 8% Hispanic and 1% Native American, and includes native speakers of 35 languages. Masters or doctoral degrees are held by 82% of the faculty.

The students in the Regional schools work hard and excel. For the 2005-2006 school year, the high school had 25 National Merit Commendations and 4 National Merit Scholarship semifinalists who received Certificates of Merit, in a class of 349 students. Ninety-two percent of our students will pursue higher education at colleges and universities across the nation after graduation from the Amherst Regional High School. Nationally normed standardized testing results reflect that, overall, our students score significantly above grade level in all areas tested. Students consistently enroll in courses beyond the standard graduation requirements.

Primary goals for the Regional Schools are as follows:

1. developing and maintaining an up-to-date, innovative, multicultural, academically challenging curriculum that promotes high standards and success for all students
2. providing creative, multi-faceted instruction that maintains high standards, engages all students, and enables all students to be successful learners
3. making all students feel fully welcome and a part of our schools, regardless of race, class, gender, language, religion, sexuality, culture, academic success, or physical abilities
4. eliminating the achievement gap among students from different racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds
5. addressing the demands and opportunities facing our schools as a result of the rapid growth in the use of technology throughout our society
6. increasing communication and collaboration among the district's stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, staff, administrators, and the larger community – and using parents and the community more effectively as educational resources
7. hiring and retaining a high quality teaching and administrative staff
8. equipping and maintaining school buildings to provide healthy, accessible, modern learning environments that support the achievement of our mission
9. sustaining a physically and emotionally safe environment in our schools for students and staff.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Principal activities and events during the 2006-2007 school year include the following:

Curriculum and Faculty Professional Development
- Work was completed on the K-12 Curriculum Guides for Mathematics, English/Language Arts, and Science. The completed guides are published on the district website at http://www.arps.org/Curriculum.
- A social studies curriculum review committee, chaired by ARHS principal Mark Jackson, began work in 2006. The work of this committee includes a process for school and community dialogue regarding social studies curriculum. The completed K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Guide is slated for publication in the summer of 2008.

ELL
- With the resignation of the ELL Director at the end of the 2005-2006 school year, Jeanne White, Student Services Administrator, was given district oversight of the ELL program. She worked with school-level coordinators to develop a model of oversight, program development, professional development, and assessment to address the restructuring of the ELL Department.
- The primary goal for ELL in FY 07 was to develop a comprehensive program model for ELL services for students K–12.

Facilities
In 2006-2007, the facilities staff completed or supervised the following projects in the Regional buildings:
- High School
  - windows inspected and repaired
  - handicap connector hallway renovation
  - library and Café door repair and modification
  - entrance ramp carpeting
  - backflow preventor rebuilt
  - access road storm drain reconstruction
  - rebuilt hot water valves
  - parking lot lights Lamping
- Middle School
  - boiler rebuilt
  - computer room air-conditioning
  - information systems egress installation
- Both Schools
  - HVAC, electrical, plumbing repairs and preventative maintenance
  - completed safety and fire inspections in all facilities.

Human Resources/Personnel
During 2006-2007, the Human Resources Department completed or is in the process of completing the following initiatives:
- Finalized the contract, statement of work, and functional specifications document with Kronos and implemented the new Kronos personnel database.
- Implemented 457/Flexible Spending Accounts for staff.

- Collected and reviewed demographic data on all staff to meet safety and software initiatives.
- Collected detailed background and educational information on all teachers and paraprofessionals in anticipation of the Massachusetts Department of Education new EPIMS (Educator Database) requirement.
- Implemented national criminal records check for new teachers coming from out-of-state.
- Performed over 1,500 criminal records checks of new and returning staff, all volunteers, coaches and tutors.
- Conducted a comprehensive Health Fair for all employees.
- Conducted an informational session for paraprofessionals to work toward degree and certification attainment.
- Completed contract negotiations with AFSCME cafeteria workers.
- Conducted Open Enrollment for insurance plans and flexible spending accounts.
- Completed negotiations for a one-year extension of the APEA (Amherst-Pelham Education Association) negotiated employment contract covering teachers, paraprofessionals and clerical staff. Administrators and cafeteria staff also agreed to an extension for an additional year through June 30, 2008.

Information Systems
In 2006-2007, the Information Systems department has completed or is continuing work on the following initiatives:
- Increased wide-area-network (WAN) backbone speed by a factor of 1,000.
- Consolidated network servers to a centralized location.
- Upgraded the Storage Area Network (SAN) – centralized storage of digital files and software.
- Continued working with other area districts and D.O.E.-selected COGNOS for a state-wide Educational Data Warehouse (EDW) for longitudinal analysis of student information and test scores.
- Prepared data for, and shipped local data to, the Educational Data Warehouse.
- Installed a remote backup server to accept nightly backups of district data to aid in disaster recovery.
- Worked with other area districts and D.O.E. to create reporting tools in the EDW for longitudinal analysis of student information and test scores.
- Centralized development of district-wide reports.
- Upgraded Student Information System from PowerSchool Pro to PowerSchool Premier for enhanced reporting and web-based GradeBook functions.
- Installed an emergency parent and staff notification system (Connect-Ed).
- Boosted Internet access "pipeline" from 3 mbps to 25 mbps.
- Installed Kronos Human Resources software.
- Explored and analyzed formative assessment software tools.

Program Development and Community Connections
In 2006-2007, the Office of Program Development:
- Secured a three-year federal foreign language instruction (FLAP) grant that will establish a K-6 Chinese language and culture program at the Wildwood School, fund a distance learning capability at the High School, and support the development of an exploratory foreign language program at the upper elementary level at all schools. A new Chinese teacher for

Wildwood Elementary has been hired, and work has begun on multi-level initiatives related to Chinese instruction in the schools.

- Secured an "Expanded Time on Learning" planning grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education. The grant will fund district-wide and school-based study groups which will consider the possibilities and implications of increasing learning time at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- Continued planning and collaboration with Amherst College to promote equity and achievement for all our students. This includes implementing a pilot "Pipeline Project" initiative, a school-year plus summer program of academic tutoring and mentoring for low-income students.
- Wendy Kohler, Executive Director of Program Development, served as a consultant to Amherst College in the establishment of their new "Center for Civic Engagement." The new Pipeline Project, an innovative program for students in grades 6-9, began in the spring and continued with a summer program in July. Pipeline students met with Amherst College tutors in the spring on the College campus and then attended classes plus an enrichment program (led by ARPS teachers with Amherst College student assistants) during the month of July.
- Established and implemented new guidelines and fee structure for school facilities and fields use.
- Collaborated with the Amherst Education Foundation on the launching of a new AEF website that includes improved fund-raising capacities.
- Began working to gather data required for the EQA audit scheduled for Fall 2007.

Student Services
- The Student Services office oversaw all aspects of the CPR – Coordinated Program Review – which was conducted by the Department of Education in 2006-2007. The CPR includes an in-depth review of district programs, including special education, ELL, and Title I. The DOE will forward a full report of the CPR findings to the Superintendent at some time in late summer or early fall of 2007.
- Monthly, in-depth professional development for paraprofessionals has been implemented, along with a training manual. In addition, a substantial number of training programs have been provided for professional staff.